



# FACT SHEET



Office of Public Affairs; 102 E. Hill Blvd; Room 224; Charleston AFB, SC 29404-5154; DSN 673-5608 or (843) 963-5608

## 437<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing History

**The 437<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, together with our Reserve associate wing, the 315<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, provides a large part of Air Mobility Command's global reach airlift capability. This rapid, flexible and responsive air mobility promotes stability in regions by keeping America's capability and character highly visible.**

### Mission

The mission of the 437<sup>th</sup> AW is to command assigned airlift and supporting units; provide for the airlift of troops and passengers, military equipment, cargo and aeromedical airlift and to participate in operations involving the airland or airdrop of troops, equipment and supplies when required.

Apart from having a heavy airdrop commitment and a demanding humanitarian mission, Charleston AFB's mission requirements range from supporting U.S. Embassies to supplying humanitarian airlift relief to victims of disasters, to airdropping troops into the heart of contingency operations in hostile areas.

Team Charleston's vision is best described as providing the premier airlift force for America from the world's premier base... **One Family! One Mission! One Fight!**

### History

- 1931** An airfield and flying service were established at Charleston's airport
- 1941** The Army Air Corps took control of the airfield to establish a defense for the eastern coast of the U.S. for World War II
- 1942** The first flights, consisting of anti-submarine missions, took off from Charleston Army Air Field
- 1943** The 437th Troop Carrier Group was activated at Baer Field, Indiana
- 1945** The 437th was inactivated after its participation in the Battle of the Bulge.

- 1946** Military operations at the airfield closed
- 1949** The 437th was reactivated into the Reserves
- 1952** Charleston and the Air Force agreed to establish a Troop carrier base and allow joint use of the runways. The 456th Troop Carrier Wing became the host unit under Tactical Air Command.
- 1956** The base was transferred to the command of Military Air Transport Service. The 1608th Air Transport Wing became the host unit
- 1966** MATS became Military Airlift Command and the 1608th was discontinued. The 437th Military Airlift Wing was reactivated and assigned to Charleston AFB. All the equipment from the 1608th was reassigned to the 437th
- 1991** The 437th MAW was redesigned as the 437th Airlift Wing when Military Airlift Command became Air Mobility Command
- 1993** In June, the 17th Airlift Squadron became the first operational squadron in the Air Force to convert to the C-17A Globemaster III
- 2000** The 16th Airlift Squadron inactivated July 15, marking the end of 35 years of C-141's here. At one time, Charleston had 58 C-141's assigned.
- 2001** Flew first night combat/humanitarian coalition mission into Afghanistan.
- 2002** 16th Airlift Squadron reactivated as fourth operational C-17 unit July 26.

### Charleston AFB aircraft, past to present

B-17 (1943-1945)



B-24 (1943-1945)



C-47 (1944-1958)



C-45 (1944-1958)

C-54 (1954-1958)



C-119 (1953-1955)



C-121 (1955-1963)



C-124 (1958-1969)

C-130 (1962-1967)



C-5 (1970-1973)



C-141 (1965-2000)



C-17 (1993-PRESENT)

Current as of February 2003